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ABSTRACT

This manual has been primarily developed to assist child care center staff who are involved in the process of the recognition of the qualifications of overseas workers within the child care industry in Western Australia. The information and practical exercises provided aim to increase staff's level of awareness and acceptance of cultural differences and should therefore also assist them in their daily responsibility of meeting the needs of parents and children in their care who are from overseas backgrounds. There is an increasing awareness of the need to provide for the effective utilization and integration into the Australian work force of immigrants who hold overseas qualifications. Section 1, which is concerned with raising the staff's level of understanding of cross-cultural issues, includes information and exercises focusing on developing understanding of cross-cultural communication and miscommunication and is relevant to those staff seeking recognition from the Department of Community Services. Section 2 aims to assist the director and his staff during the training/orientation practicum component of the recognition process. (Contains seven references.) (CK)

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ORIENTATION MANUAL FOR CHILD CARE CENTRES INVOLVED IN THE RECOGNITION OF OVERSEAS AS TRAINED WORKERS

This manual has been produced for the Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training (Overseas Qualifications Unit), and the Department of Community Services.

Materials have been compiled as a joint venture by the Department of Community Care Studies and Adult Migrant Education Services of the Department of TAFE.

Many thanks to the various people who contributed their ideas and experiences, in particular the Fremantle Migrant Resource Centre, and those overseas qualified workers and child care centre staff who have already been involved in the recognition process.

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January 1992

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INTRODUCTION

This manual has been primarily developed to assist child care centre staff who are involved in the process of the recognition of the qualifications of overseas workers within the child care industry in Western Australia.

It does however have a far wider application. The information and practical exercises provided aim to increase staff's level of awareness and acceptance of cultural differences and should therefore also assist them in their daily responsibility of meeting the needs of parents and children in their care who are of overseas background.

RECOGNITION OF OVERSEAS QUALIFIED WORKERS

There is an increasing awareness within our community of the need to provide for the effective utilisation and integration into the Australian work force of migrants who hold overseas qualifications.

It is currently estimated that some 7,000 - 10,000 skilled migrants in Australia per year are experiencing great difficulties in obtaining appropriate positions in the labour market.
Some of the difficulties experienced by migrants entering the skilled labour market are due to:

* Problems obtaining recognition of overseas qualifications

* Employer resistance to taking account of overseas skills and experience and a reluctance to accommodate cultural differences.

If overseas qualifications are not recognised many migrants may experience personal and professional frustration and anxiety. Further-more society is denied the benefit of their contributions. In children's services overseas qualified workers will bring a wealth of knowledge and a variety of experience, enriching the quality of care and the cultural experiences of children and families.

In Western Australia the Child Care Qualifications Committee (CCQC) has been established by the Department of Community Services and is responsible for the recognition of overseas trained workers in the child care industry.

This committee assesses each application to ascertain whether the child care qualifications obtained overseas meet the staffing qualifications requirements of the Community Services (Child Care) Regulations (1988). The recognition process usually involves the applicant's completion of a period of structured practical training/orientation within a child care centre.

AIMS

This manual aims to assist the directors/coordinators of child care centres who participate in the practicum component of the recognition process.

It is divided into two sections.

Section 1

This section is concerned with raising the staff's level of awareness and understanding of cross-cultural issues. It includes information and exercises focusing on developing understanding of cross-cultural communication and miscommunication.

It is relevant to all child care staff who are involved in the care of children who have an overseas background or who are already working with caregivers from overseas.

It is of particular relevance to those staff who will be involved in the training/orientation of overseas qualified workers who are seeking recognition of their qualifications and experience from the Department of Community Services. It is strongly recommended that all centre staff work through this section prior to their acceptance of such an overseas qualified worker.

It is however recognised that the exercises provided require sensitive facilitation and initially Directors/Coordinators of child care centres will be provided with a one day training workshop to work through this section.

On completion of this training they will be asked to consider the relevant in-service training needs of their staff. It is recognised that some of the material in this section is currently provided within the Associate Diploma in Social Sciences (Child Care) and that staff needs will vary from centre to centre.

Directors may wish to run workshops themselves for their staff or they may decide to utilise existing training providers such as TAFE, the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (DILGEA), the Ethnic Child Care Resource Unit (ECRU) or the Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES), to facilitate cross-cultural awareness workshops for their staff.

Section 2

The aim of this section is to assist the director and his/her staff during the training/orientation practicum component of the recognition process. It aims to:

1. Provide all of those people involved in the practicum with the necessary background information.

2. Clarify the recognition process by identifying the responsibilities of all those who are involved in the practicum.

3. Assist child care centre directors and staff in the effective orientation of the overseas trained worker.

SECTION 1

RAISING CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Good communication is essential in any productive and harmonious workplace. In the multicultural workplace, effective communication is particularly important. You may be working with, and therefore need to communicate with people whose language, background and ways of thinking are not always the same as your own.

Under these circumstances, cross-cultural mis-understanding commonly occurs. It may occur for a wide variety of reasons. At times it is easily remedied. At others, it is not, and may result in serious workplace tensions, and communication breakdowns.

Miscommunication of any type is often difficult to address because it is associated with personality differences, power-relationships, entrenched attitudes and values, and often with the investment people have in maintaining it.

This section of the manual aims to help prevent the more serious and damaging cross-cultural miscommunication that can occur in multicultural workplaces. Some of the information is particularly focused on communication between English speaking staff and staff from non-English speaking backgrounds.

It provides some background information and group exercises and discussion points relevant to:

* migration as a personal experience
* communication and culture
* the advantages of having overseas qualified workers in your centre.
* strategies for encouraging greater participation in the workplace of overseas qualified workers.
* appendices on recruiting Non English Speaking Background (NESB) workers and appointing a selection panel.

1.1 MIGRATION AS A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

For those who have had the experience of international migration, moves from state to state, from country to the city, or even simply the first visit to a foreign country and culture, the experience of feelings of loss, isolation and often of helplessness will be familiar.

For some, migration is simply a transition which can, without great difficulty, be accommodated. For others, migration is an experience of separation which threatens the integrity of the individual's social and personal identity. For others still, migration can be an experience that is so devastating personally, that it is akin to bereavement.

GROUP EXERCISE 1 (from Davis & Kambouris, 1989)

Ask staff to think about the question "What is an immigrant?"

Staff share their interpretations as a group and at an appropriate point in the discussion suggest this as being representative of their views:

"An immigrant is the person **you** would be if you went to live in another country"

Take some time to explore this statement with staff and to discuss their reaction to it.

GROUP EXERCISE 2 (from Davis & Kambouris, 1989)

A useful, brief group exercise on this topic is to ask all staff to share information about their own ethnic backgrounds. Questions which can be posed are:

- When did you/your family/your ancestors come to Australia?
- Which country did you/your family/your ancestors come from?
- Why did you/they come to Australia?

(Refer over page for some of the reasons for migration).

Refer to the table in Appendix 3 which provides information on the ethnic groups of which Western Australian society is composed.

Some Reasons Why Migrants Have Come to Australia:

We came to Australia as skilled people with qualifications in child care and over 15 years experience. We seek a better future for ourselves and our children.

We came to Australia for the sake of our children. We liked the idea of bringing them up in a new country with a good climate and plenty of opportunity to do well and make a decent living.

I came for an adventure. I had a dead-end job at home and thought I would like to see more of the world. The government paid my fare, so I had nothing to lose really.

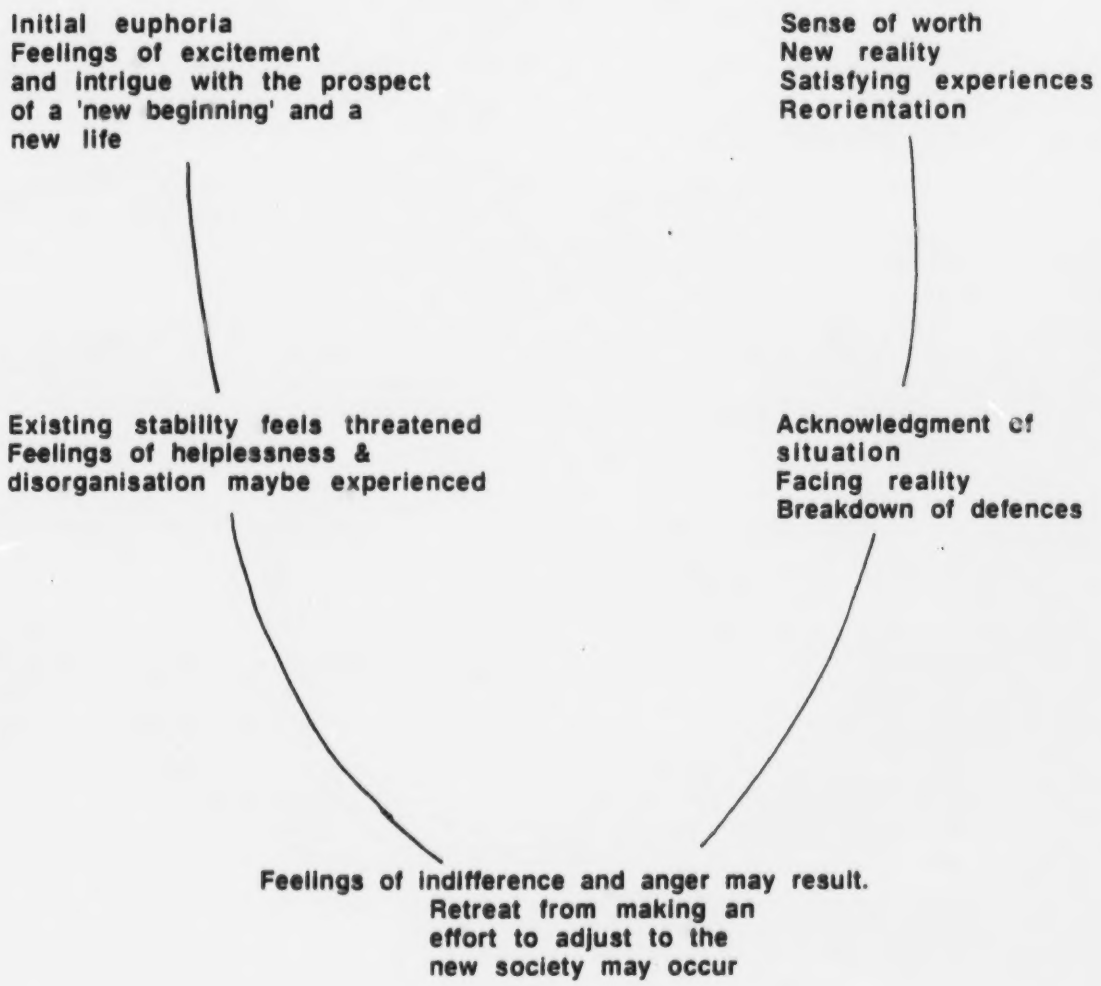
I came to Australia to marry my fiance. We were engaged in my own country but he came to Australia to find work and get a home ready for me.

We came as refugees. Soon after World War II, the communists took over my country. We packed our bags and fled to a refugee camp across the border. The United Nations arranged for us to come to Australia. It was a very quiet and peaceful country.

Reference: Coupe, S. and Rowan, C. (1986) P71.

GROUP EXERCISE 3 <u>The 'U' Curve of Migration</u>

Ask if any of your staff can relate this curve to any migration experience that they may have had. Staff should be encouraged to relate anecdotes about their experiences.


Initial euphoria
Feelings of excitement and intrigue with the prospect of a 'new beginning' and a new life
Existing stability feels threatened
Feelings of helplessness & disorganisation maybe experienced
Feelings of indifference and anger may result.
Retreat from making an effort to adjust to the new society may occur
Acknowledgment of situation
Facing reality
Breakdown of defences
Sense of worth
New reality
Satisfying experiences
Reorientation

Adapted from: CMW package, Adult Migrant Education Service
English in the Workplace, Eastern Region NSW

GROUP EXERCISE 4

The following exercise explores the impact of the resettlement experience.

Staff consider the following situation:

A 35 year old woman from South East Asia has arrived in Australia as a refugee with her husband and two young children. She has qualified as a child care worker in her country of origin and has ten years experience as a child care worker. She has her qualifications with her, which she intends to have recognised. Her English language skills are reasonably proficient, so she naturally does not anticipate that she will experience too many difficulties in finding a full-time child care worker's position in Australia.

Discuss: How do you think she may be coping after 6 months?

Staff need to consider what sort of things would make the first six months of arrival in a new country hardest/easiest.

These can be listed in 2 columns on a board. For eg:

HARDEST	EASIEST

As part of this exercise also consider:

How best could people respond to her in her new socio-cultural environment?

For many migrants the task of adjusting to a new socio-cultural environment means that they are continually in a condition of uncertainty. The social behaviour that you learn in your home society does not always bring with it the expected social responses in a new society. As a result migrants may well be continually thrown into situations in which they are unsure of the appropriate responses.

Often the first step on the road to a new sense of worth and life satisfaction is gaining employment at a level commensurate with their knowledge and skills.

It is at this point that an overseas trained worker may enter your centre.

It pays to have some understanding of the background experiences of such a worker in your centre, and of the established policies such as Equal Employment Opportunity legislation that may affect them (See Appendix 2).

1.2 PERCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPING

It is also valuable to be aware of our own perceptions of people especially those from cultural backgrounds different to our own. These may not be shaped by personal experience or interaction, but rather formed by absorbing over-generalised, preconceived beliefs about other people. Such preconceived beliefs within a community lead to **stereotyping**.

STEREOTYPING

* **A stereotype is a pattern of behaviour attributed to an individual because of his or her membership of a group.**

* **Stereotypes are dangerous because they can limit our perception of individuals.**

* **Stereotyping gives some people an advantage they don't deserve and others an unjustified penalty. This is discrimination.**

* We can also run the risk of stereotyping socially appropriate practices. This may extend to child rearing practices.

The following exercise aims to help staff become aware of the inappropriateness of generalising about a culture's child rearing practices.

GROUP EXERCISE 5 (Adapted from A, Stonehouse 1991)

Pretend that you are in another country and you have been asked to present a talk on the topic of Australian child rearing practices.

As a group decide what you would say.

It is hoped that lively debate will develop from this exercise about what can be said, and the point is made that it is difficult to generalise.

1.3 CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

GROUP EXERCISE 6

In groups discuss the following questions:

* What is your definition of culture?
* What is Australian culture?
* Can we produce a definitive statement?

Culture clearly does not only include superficial aspects like food, clothing and folk dances. It also includes:

- our attitudes
- thought systems
- communication styles
- perceptions
- goals
- values
- social systems and institutions
- religious/political beliefs.

- In turn, our perceptions of people and things around us are influenced by:

    - our personal history
    - attitudes
    - personalities
    - age
    - role
    - cultural background
    - education

COMMUNICATION

Real communication and sensitivity is essential for understanding people from other cultural backgrounds and for being understood by them.

Communication is about getting your message across to others and receiving messages from those communicating with you. The communication process therefore involves:

Giving, Receiving and Processing information.

Communication involves both verbal and non-verbal behaviour. This may vary across cultures. The following information will indicate some of the variance in verbal and non-verbal behaviour across cultures, and highlight some of the barriers to effective communication.

GROUP EXERCISE 7

Read the following examples of non-verbal and verbal communication. Encourage staff to discuss and share situations in which they have been made aware of some of these cultural differences as a result of contact with people from other cultures.

A. Variations in <u>non-verbal behaviour</u> across cultures:

Some examples:

1. **<u>Facial Expressions:</u>**

The misconception that facial expressions have a universal meaning has the potential to interfere with communication.

<u>Smiling</u>: has different functions in different cultural contexts.

Some cultures equate it with friendliness, good humour, amusement or benevolence.

In other cultures it may be used as a way of:

- masking embarrassment or other emotions
- concealing unease or even distaste

For example: some individuals from other cultures laugh or smile when someone is angry with them. They are not only saving face for themselves, but also for the angry person.

This observation from the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs will help to illustrate this.

"The Vietnamese may smile in a variety of social situations. In Vietnam they will smile when foreigners cannot pronounce their names properly; they will smile as a friendly but silent gesture to welcome foreigners to their home; they will smile to please their superiors; they will smile to show their interest in what a speaker is telling them; they will smile to help their friend forget a mistake the latter made. On the other hand, the Vietnamese smile can be used as a polite screen to hide confusion, ignorance, fear, contrition, shyness, bitterness, disappointment or anger etc.

Smiling at all times and places is a common characteristic of all Vietnamese. There are, however, no guidelines to tell foreigners what the meaning of each smile represents in each situation. "*Remember that the Vietnamese smile may mean almost anything....*" (BT Duoung A Handbook for Teachers of Vietnamese Students, Arlington. VA 1975, p17-18).

It is important to be aware that a Vietnamese smile is not necessarily a sign of pleasure, agreement or recognition as it tends to be when displayed by an Australian.

2. **Eye Contact**

In some cultures - looking directly at a person while speaking is associated with honesty.

In many cultures lowered eyes may indicate an attitude of respect, not guilt.

3. **Social Distance**

High contact cultures eg Arab, Greek, Turkish, Latin American usually stand close to each other when conversing.

Low contact cultures eg Northern European and American stand further apart.

4. **Posture and Movement**

Gestures vary in meaning from place to place. For example the beckoning 'come here' movement that we make with our index finger is extremely offensive, and has a totally different meaning in some cultures.

In some cultures it is offensive to point, or to extend the hand palm up.

In some cultures shaking ones head from side to side means 'I understand'.

B. Variations in <u>verbal behaviour</u> across cultures:

Some Examples:

1. **<u>Greetings</u>**

These too will vary from culture to culture
In Australia, people are addressed by name much more frequently than in many other cultures eg. 'Excuse me, Mary'. 'Good morning Sharon'.
If people do not use names it is not necessarily a sign of rudeness.

Many migrants find it difficult to adjust to using first names, especially with people they regard as authority figures.

Often Mr, Mrs, Miss may be attached to a first name.

2. **Polite Questions**

Questions which cause offence in one culture may not in another.

eg: How much do you earn?
Do you own your own home?
Why don't you have children?

These may be acceptable in some cultures but asking someone's first name may be offensive in some cultural settings.

3. **Small Talk**

What is the most popular topic for small talk in our society?

People from other cultures may make small talk by asking such things as whether;

- someone has eaten
- where she/he is going and why

For example:

- a person may ask 'what is your programme?' to find out what you are going to do that day or weekend.
- When Australians do not say 'you're welcome', Americans sometimes feel that their thanks have been ignored.

4. **Vocal Aspects**

Tone of voice
Loudness
Intonation
Fluency

All have an effect on the speaker and the listener.

Emphasising or stressing a different word in each sentence can change the meaning. We are all attuned to how tone can convey a message - it will often tell us more directly than words can whether a person is angry, depressed, tentative etc.

The Bank Scene excerpt from the John Gumperz video **Crosstalk,** illustrates the effect an inappropriate tone can have on communication.

5. **Register: the form of language** - whether it's colloquial, literary, technical - will indicate the context of a conversation. For example the jargon of work is different to the language used at home.

The subtleties of an unfamiliar language are often difficult especially for some people from non-English speaking backgrounds to interpret. This may lead to communication problems.

The following observation from the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, indicates how the language that we use, and the subtle meanings which are carried by language, can lead to cross-cultural misunderstanding.

Many Eastern Europeans use the expression 'Of course' (raised pitch and emphasis on 'cor' : 'ov cor sz'), frequently in response to questions. How do we as interviewers respond to this? We might feel the interviewee is a bit cocky; perhaps even sneering a little at our silly questions! It can certainly cause a defensive, even aggressive reaction on our part, but what is the interviewee actually saying! There is an expression in Polish ('oczywiscie') which translates literally to 'of course', its usage in Polish however is more in terms of an acknowledgment: 'uh-huh' or 'I'm with you'.

It is therefore, not an arrogant dismissal of the interviewer but merely an acknowledgment and continuing participation on the part of the interviewee.

(Adapted from Craig.J, and Wayne.D).

1.3.1 SOME BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS:

Ask staff to consider the following list and discuss situations where any of these things have caused communication breakdowns or misunderstandings.

* Inattention or lack of interest
* Poor expression - eg unclear instruction or the like
* Distrust
* Lack of confidence
* Ethnic backgrounds - distrust and prejudice of others
* Cultural differences - important to some but disregarded by others
* Personal beliefs - religion, politics - if these are upset communication may break down
* Ingrained attitudes - unable to see others' points of view
* Belief in cultural stereotypes
* Language difficulties for ESL users or English users attempting to communicate in another language
* Variations in pronunciation
* Tone - not just the words but the <u>way</u> they are used
* Impatience - lack of time given to listen
* Lack of feedback - communication is a two way process, response is needed

1.4 THE OVERSEAS TRAINED WORKER IN YOUR CENTRE

1.4.1 Advantages for the Centre.

GROUP EXERCISE 8

Ask staff to consider some of the possible advantages of having an overseas trained worker in your centre.

After discussion check if you have included all those listed below.

Overseas trained staff who work well in a centre have many positive qualities to contribute to the life of the centre:

* their very presence makes it easier for a multicultural perspective to be constantly present in the centre programme. The children will be exposed to adults who may for example, look and speak differently to themselves, as a normal and natural part of the daily programme;

* the staffs' acceptance of these differences in each other provides valuable modelling for the children;

* they are likely to bring with them a wealth of knowledge about their culture, and to introduce variety into the child rearing practices;

* they may have a language other than English which they can use with all children, as well as with children whose first language is the same as theirs;

* they can be an important bridge with parents from their own cultural and linguistic background.

1.4.2 Cross - Cultural Child Rearing Practices

Child rearing practices are not identical across cultures. Awareness of some of the child rearing practices in other cultures will help when relating to overseas trained caregivers, and to parents of children from other cultures.

* It is important that you become familiar with and recognise the child rearing practices of an overseas trained worker in your centre. This is the intent of the suggested exercise in Section 2 (p. 43).

* Whilst the onus would be on the overseas trained worker to adapt to caregiving practices of your centre during a practicum, this will take both knowledge and time on his/her part. In the meantime your staff may well find themselves in the situation where the worker is involved in what they perceive to be inappropriate practice.

* Different child rearing practices introduced by the overseas trained worker may be considered to be quite appropriate and these would become integrated into the centre programme.

The following three exercises are suggested to develop empathy for the position that an overseas trained worker is in whilst on practicum in your centre, and to develop appropriate strategies for dealing with any possible conflict which may occur.

GROUP EXERCISE 9

Ask staff to individually consider the following situation.

Imagine that you are a qualified child care worker on a working holiday in Turkey.

On your first day at the child care centre where you have been employed you are asked to serve lunch to the boys before the girls:

How would you feel about the request?

What would you do?

As a group discuss your responses.

GROUP EXERCISE 10

Ask staff to next consider this situation:

Imagine that you have migrated to Thailand and secure a part-time position as a trained staff member in a child care centre. The children are being toilet trained at six months of age.

How would you respond to this practice?

Encourage staff to discuss their individual responses.

GROUP EXERCISE 11

The following worksheet Different Values (see over) should be individually completed by staff and then responses can be discussed as a group.

* It is anticipated that staff will recognise the need to both listen to the worker's concerns, and to explain their own practices within the 'hygiene context'.

Worksheet: Different Values

Ut is constantly concerned about the children's appearance. She steers the children away from 'messy activities' and does not want to put the babies or toddlers outside on the grass. Today, when asked to put baby Mandy down in the sand pit, Ut looked visibly distressed. After five minutes she had taken Mandy back inside. Ut took Mandy into the bathroom and spent fifteen minutes 'washing away the diseases'.

My probable reaction would be:

I would tell her 'Don't be so fussy'. [ ]

I would tell her not to be so obvious about her feelings. [ ]

I would explain to her the Anglo/Australian values, in relation to children's appearance, playing on the grass, in the sand. [ ]

I would talk to her about attitudes and values in her culture related to children's appearance, play opportunities. [ ]

I would try to spend time with her to find out how she was feeling generally, if she had anything she would like to understand or question about the caregiving practices in the centre. [ ]

Other ideas:

1.4.3 General Strategies For Improving Cross-Cultural Communication in the Child Care Centre Workplace

- Avoid stereotyping
- Increase your own and staff's cultural understanding of the 'worker's' background.
- Be sensitive to non-verbal signals and the cultural implication of these signals.
- Consider the 'worker' as a valuable resource for your centre's multicultural programming.
- Ensure that the objectives of the placement are understood by ALL concerned.
- Provide a thorough orientation for the 'worker' to ensure that they understand the organisation and culture of the centre.
- Show an interest in individuals and be supportive.
- Check for feedback and encourage it.
- Coach and encourage 'worker' to express their ideas.
- Encourage a comfortable working atmosphere in the centre by team building.
- Show trust and give appropriate responsibility to the 'worker'.
- Provide a buddy-system where possible.

1.4.4 General Strategies for Eliciting Feedback when giving Instructions to NESB workers

- Look for signs of non-comprehension. This gives the worker a chance to ask for further clarification.

  eg "You look a little confused, would you like to ask about anything?"

- Try to ask open-ended questions and avoid questions which only require yes or no answers.

- NESB employees may need extra time to process the message in English, allow for this and give time for the worker to respond.

Effective cross-cultural communication is not always a smooth process. Understanding and effort is required.

An NESB worker, on entering your centre, may need support and encouragement to assist in building up confidence.

Staff from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds will have a great deal to offer if given the chance to do so.

It is important to realise that miscommunication can be avoided by a few simple practices:

- good listening skills

- clear questioning

- constant awareness of the others' reactions, and

- the ability to recognize the first signs of confusion and to respond appropriately.

1.5. A FINAL WORD ON CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

"Individuals cannot be **taught** to communicate effectively across cultures; it is something that they must **learn** to do for themselves. There is no single method which people can acquire, and no set of rules which they can simply put into practice. The reason for this is that language is used within such a great range of situations and the way language is used has to take account of so many variables. There is no neat way individuals can be told exactly what to do in situations such as job interviews, difficulties at work and so on. Every piece of good communication depends upon the response and feedback which participants in a conversation receive from each other during the conversation itself, and every speaker has to develop his or her own strategies for interpreting and responding appropriately."

John Gumperz - Crosstalk

SECTION 2

THE PRACTICUM

2.0. OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN THE PRACTICUM

2.0.1 CHILD CARE QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE (CCQC).

a. To organise a one day cross-cultural awareness training workshop for directors of child care centres who will be involved in the future practicum component of the accreditation process.

b. To determine the required length of each applicant's practicum and to identify specific practicum objectives.To make this information available to both the centre and the applicant prior to the commencement of the practicum.

c. To organise the placement of each applicant into a centre for their required practicum.

d. To inform the centre of applicant's qualifications and experience in child care.

e. To nominate the mentor.

f. To provide the applicant with support materials, for example "Support Module 0-2 Years" (TAFE 1991)

g. To nominate a second assessor if the applicant is having difficulties meeting the specific practicum objectives.

h. To officially notify the applicant of the result of the practicum.

i. To review the practicum procedures periodically.

j. To evaluate the effectiveness of this manual.

2.0.2 OVERSEAS TRAINED WORKER

a. To fully utilise the practicum to develop skills, resources and knowledge relevant to current child rearing and child care workplace practices in W.A.

b. To work through the "Support Module 0-2 Years" (TAFE 1991) prior to the commencement of the practicum.

c. To meet the stated objectives for the practicum as determined by the Child Care Qualifications Committee.

2.0.3 DIRECTOR

a. To prepare the staff, children, management committee and parents of his/her centre for the practicum prior to its commencement.

b. To orientate the overseas trained worker (applicant) to the centre prior to, and at the beginning of, the commencement of the practicum.

c. To act as the "facilitator" for the applicant as s/he works through the "Support Module 0-2 Years" (TAFE, 1991).

d. To closely liaise with both the applicant and the relevant trained staff throughout the practicum, providing regular contact and feedback to both.

e. To assess, in part through consultation with trained staff, whether the applicant has satisfactorily achieved practicum objectives.

* It is the responsibility of the director to advise the CCQC at least half way through the practicum, or at any other appropriate time, if the applicant is having difficulty meeting practicum objectives, so that a second assessor can be nominated.

f. To discuss with the applicant the result of the practicum, and to officially advise the CCQC of this.

g. To review the practicum with centre staff after it's completion and to provide a written summary to the CCQC.

2.0.4 CENTRE STAFF

a. To help the applicant feel welcome and comfortable, and to orientate him/her to all relevant routine procedures and policies of their caregiving room.

b. To guide and support the applicant in the practical application of theory and knowledge in the West Australian context.

2.0.5 THE MENTOR

a. To be available to the applicant on a regular weekly basis to support and facilitate their effective integration into the centre's programme.

2.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR: PREPARATION OF THE CENTRE

2.1.2 PREPARING STAFF

Prior to the commencement of the practicum it is vital that the centre staff are adequately prepared and informed. It is assumed that you and your staff have been involved in some in-service training in cross-cultural awareness as a vital part of the preparation process.

The following is a list of additional recommended actions (in boxes) in preparation for the commencement of the practicum of the overseas trained worker.

a. Provide the staff with all relevant background information about the applicant and the practicum. Photocopy the following information sheet (pages 35 & 36) and distribute or circulate to all staff.
This provides staff with general background information about the overseas trained worker and main aims of the practicum.
*The worker should be encouraged to share their specific background information with the staff once in the centre.

b. Provide the staff with the stated objectives and expectations of the worker in particular caregiving rooms. These are to be provided by the CCQC.

c. After staff have had the opportunity to read the above mentioned information provide an opportunity for them to discuss their attitudes/expectations of the overseas trained worker. Encourage staff to critically assess these, and encourage staff to think of additional ways in which they could contribute to the worker's effective integration into the centre.

d. Introduce a "buddy system" whereby an individual staff member assumes responsibility to "adopt and care for" the worker during the practicum.

e. Ask relevant staff to write a summary of their room's caregiving policies and practices. An example format which can be tailored to suit your centre is provided in Appendix 4.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE OVERSEAS TRAINED WORKER AND THE PRACTICUM.

The overseas trained worker completing a practicum in your centre is a person who has completed a course of study and **has been awarded a qualification** in the area of early childhood education and/or care in their country of origin. In many cases they will have years of experience in the field of child care.

The person has had to apply to the Child Care Qualifications Committee to have their qualifications and experience approved to meet the requirements of the Western Australian Community Services (Child Care) Regulations (1988).

The committee has considered all aspects of the worker's training, qualification and practical experience, and has approved the person as category A or B subject to their satisfactory completion of a particular period of structured practical training/orientation (practicum) in a child care centre. The successful completion of a practicum in a 0 - 3 years nursery would result in the applicant being approved as a category A* or B* worker.

The length of this practicum will vary from 3 - 12 weeks and is determined by the Committee.

Whilst all overseas applicants have one thing in common i.e. they hold a recognised overseas qualification, they will generally differ in a number of important aspects, for example:

* Country of origin and cultural background.
* Length of settlement in Australia.
* Age and variety of practical experience in child care in either their country of origin or Australia.

There are four main purposes of the practicum:

1. To provide the overseas qualified worker with the opportunity to gain first hand experience and knowledge of current work practices in West Australian daycare centres.

2. To provide the opportunity for the overseas qualified worker to be guided through the practical application of their theory and knowledge in a West Australian context.

3. To assess the overseas qualified workers level of competence/knowledge in the care of young children in a daycare environment.

4. To raise awareness in centre staff of the contributions that overseas qualified workers can make to the child care field.

2.1.2 PREPARING THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The director should ensure that the management committee is fully informed and aware of the purposes of the placement, and the potential value to the child care field of supporting this recognition process.

The following is a list of recommended actions for achieving this:

a. Distribute photocopies of the 'Background Information on the Overseas Trained Worker and the Practicum' (pages 35 & 36) to the management committee.

b. Inform the management committee of the responsibilities of all those involved in the practicum (Pages 30 - 32).

c. Make this manual and the "Support Module 0-2 years", available to those committee members who are interested in finding out more about the practicum.

d. Suggest to the committee that they ask the overseas trained worker to participate in a committee meeting or social event at the centre.

2.1.3 PREPARING PARENTS

The director should ensure that all parents are aware of the presence and the purpose of the overseas trained worker in the centre.

The following is a list of recommended actions for achieving this:

a. Ask staff to verbally introduce the overseas trained worker to parents as the opportunity arises.

b. Introduce the overseas trained worker to parents through your centre's usual methods of written communications:

* Display a poster and ask the worker to supply a photo:

"We would like to welcome ..... who is a qualified caregiver from ..... and is on practicum in our centre for.....";

c. Use your newsletter to inform parents in more detail of the general purpose of the practicum, and some of the contributions the worker is making to the centre's programme.

d. Display posters in your centre which publicise the recognition process of overseas trained workers in Australia.
* The worker may have photos/posters from their country of origin to make a display for parents' interest and information.

2.1.4 PREPARING CHILDREN

Young children do not need to be prepared prior to the commencement of the overseas trained worker, but once the practicum has commenced staff should encourage the children's familiarity with the caregiver, and to utilise the worker where possible to develop children's awareness and acceptance of individual and cultural similarities and differences.

The following is a list of recommended actions for achieving this:

a. Ask the worker to provide the children with experiences relevant to their own culture at a developmentally appropriate level.
For example
* sing simple songs
* use own language for verbally labelling everyday objects
* use own language for simple counting
* share greetings
* read short stories to older children in their own language
* demonstrate/teach a folk dance
* provide a cooking activity
* provide a snack or meal for children to taste

b. Collect suitable pictures/books of relevant ethnic group for display and discussion by the worker with the children.

c. Use the worker as a source of different household items and clothing to introduce a cross cultural element into your dramatic play area.

e. Encourage the worker to spontaneously use own songs and language as appropriate during caregiving routines and play e.g. singing babies to sleep etc.

f. Develop a photo album or scrap book of the practicum.

* Whilst the worker may be only required to work in one room of the centre, as the placement progresses, staff could ask to "borrow" him/her on occasions to enhance their own room's multicultural programme.

A NOTE TO STAFF

The overseas trained worker may need to be encouraged to share his/her cultural and linguistic background with the children. Many migrants have had the experience of needing to cover up their backgrounds in order to fit in to the "Australian culture". They may well need to feel convinced that their contributions will be valued. If your programme already has a multicultural perspective this will facilitate their integration into the life of the centre.

2.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR: ORIENTATION OF THE OVERSEAS TRAINED WORKER

It is essential that the overseas trained worker be welcomed to the centre and appropriately orientated.
The worker must also be made aware of the practicum objectives and their responsibilities as listed on p. 31.

Below are some guidelines and orientation procedures which will facilitate this.

2.2.1 GUIDELINES FOR ORIENTATION:

1. The risk of "information overload" is very high for any newcomer into the workplace. This is especially the case for some people of non English speaking background (NESB), as they may be having to learn the language as well as adjust to the practicum requirements.

   To avoid overload it is necessary to:

   a. provide information over a period of time, do not expect the worker to be able to take in all information immediately. Stagger the giving of necessary information over the first week.

   b. utilise a range of methods for communicating information such as:

   * supplementing all verbal information with written material.
   * utilising a number of staff to present / explain centre procedures and policies.
   * encouraging feedback and questioning.

2. To make the worker feel welcome and comfortable it is necessary to:

   a. Schedule tasks to provide direction and guidance early in the practicum. Whilst some time should be available for adjusting to the workplace through observation of programmes, most people feel more confident in a new situation if given specific tasks to carry out.

b. Encourage the worker to first do things that they do best. For example they may choose to work in the preschoolers room first if this is their area of most experience, and within this room they may feel most confident reading to the group rather than supervising lunch routines. This will enable them to adjust to the new workplace before having to take on more challenging tasks.

c. Encourage the worker to function independently and effectively by taking the time to explain and discuss the underlying reasons for centre policies and procedures.

* Be sensitive to the possibility that it may take time for the overseas trained worker to feel a part of the team, and to ask questions or give feedback. In many cultures attitudes towards authority are quite different from those in Australia. If they are from a culture in which authority is never challenged, or questioned in any way it takes some time to adjust to the "team work" approach of child care and to adapt to 'having a voice' in the workplace.

2.2.2 PROCEDURES FOR ORIENTATION

It would be most useful to arrange for the overseas trained worker to visit the centre **prior** to starting the practicum, to be given a tour of the centre and to be introduced to all staff.

* A list of all caregivers' names and positions should be provided.
* Written information about the centre's operation, philosophy and caregiving practices should also be given at this time.
* Provide any relevant information about the local area, for example: libraries, bus routes etc.

DAY 1:

On arrival introduce the worker to their room and arrange with staff for the worker to spend the first morning in the room observing.

In the afternoon it will be necessary for the director to spend time with the worker to:

a. answer any questions from their mornings experiences,
b. provide and discuss with the worker the following information:
   * A statement of the practicum objectives.
   * The Assessment Schedule and procedures of assessment.
c. organise a regular time to discuss with him/her and the staff, their progress and work in the centre.

DAY 2.

Construct Practicum Handbook.

Work out a time line on which tasks will be scheduled. This is dependent upon the length of the practicum and the range of ages that the worker is required to have experience with. A Sample Handbook which would be suitable for a three week placement in the babies or toddlers room is provided in Appendix 5. This is a guide only which can be tailored to suit your centre.

DAY 3, 4, OR 5

Provide the opportunity for the worker to share information about their culture and child rearing practices with the other staff.

This could be structured in the following way:

Provide all staff and the worker with a copy of a background paper of the relevant culture's child rearing practices, to be read prior to the discussion. (A good source of these is *'Child Rearing & Background Information'*. FKA Multicultural Resource Centre Victoria. This is available from the Ethnic Child Care Resource Unit or TAFE).

Ask the worker to use this information to share with the group how their own experiences are similar or different to those described in the reading.

This experience should help to

a. make the worker feel welcome and give him/her a sense that their cultural background is valued.
b. establish a positive rapport between the worker and staff.
c. develop awareness that it is important to avoid stereotyping i.e. making generalisations about people's attitudes, experiences and practices on the basis of culture.

At the end of week 1 refer to the 'Checklist for Orientation' (see over) to ensure that you have effectively orientated the worker to your centre.

CHECKLIST FOR ORIENTATION

1. Tour of whole centre including facilities to meet personal needs e.g. toilets, lockers, lunch provisions. [ ]

2. Introduction to all centre staff .. .. [ ]

3. Explanation of emergency procedures .. .. .. [ ]

4. Explanation of practicum objectives .. .. .. [ ]

5. Explanation of assessment process .. .. .. [ ]

6. Explanation of centre philosophy and policies .. .. [ ]

7. Construction of Practicum Handbook .. .. .. [ ]

8. Allocation of time for regular meetings .. .. [ ]

9. Written information Provided:

   Staff names/positions .. .. [ ]
   Centre philosophy & policies .. .. [ ]
   Practicum objectives .. .. [ ]
   Assessment Schedule .. .. [ ]
   Support Module 0-2 Years .. .. [ ]
   Hours and rosters for practicum .. .. [ ]
   Daily Schedules for each room .. .. [ ]
   'Introduction to Room's Caregiving Policies & Practices' [ ]

10. Poster of introduction for parents .. .. .. [ ]

11. Nomination of a "buddy" .. .. [ ]

12. Organisation of informal staff meeting for worker to share cultural background .. .. [ ]

13. Information on local resources .. .. [ ]

2.3 THE REVIEW PROCESS

Review of the practicum is essential to ensure the ongoing success of the recognition process of overseas trained workers.

The following evaluation form (see over) is intended to be a guide to assist you in the formulation of a written assessment of the practicum component of the recognition process.

This written assessment should be completed within a fortnight of the completion of the practicum and then forwarded to the Child Care Qualifications Committee

It is suggested that you complete this form or write your own assessment in consultation with all staff who have been directly involved in the training of the worker, and that some feedback is sought from the management committee.

2.3.1 EVALUATION OF THE PRACTICUM

Centre Name: _____

Centre Director: _____

Name of Overseas Trained Worker: _____

Practicum Dates: _____

1. Do you consider that the practicum was of benefit to the centre? How?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Did you or your staff experience any difficulties in meeting any of your responsibilities? YES / NO

Comments:

_____
_____
_____
_____

If you answered YES please provide information about the difficulties experienced and reasons why you think that they might have occurred.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Did this manual assist you and your staff in your participation in the practicum? YES / NO

If YES, which aspects of the manual did you find most useful?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

If NO, please indicate how you think that it could be changed.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Would you recommend any improvements to the current procedures in the recognition of Overseas Qualified Workers?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Would you consider being further involved in the recognition of Overseas Qualified Workers?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

FAMILIES WITH ETHNIC BACKGROUND

TABLE 3a BIRTHPLACE OF PERSONS AGED 15+ WHO WERE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND AUSTRALIA ON 30 June 1986

	W.A	AUST
Major English Speaking	(%)	(%)
Australia	64.6	73.2
UK & Ireland	17.2	9.1
New Zealand	2.0	1.5
USA and Canada	0.8	0.5
South Africa	0.5	0.3
Total major English speaking	85.1	84.6
Europe		
Italy	2.6	2.1
Netherlands	1.1	0.8
Yugoslavia	1.0	1.2
Germany	0.8	0.9
Poland	0.6	0.5
Greece	0.4	1.1
Other Europe	1.4	2.1
Total Europe (excluding UK & Ireland)	7.9	8.7
Asia		
India	1.0	0.4
Malaysia/Brunei	0.7	0.4
Singapore	0.4	0.1
Vietnam	0.4	0.5
Indonesia	0.2	0.1
Philippines	0.2	0.2
China	0.1	0.3
Sri Lanka	0.1	0.2
Other Asia	1.1	1.6
Total Asia	4.2	3.8
other America	0.2	0.3
other Africa	0.7	0.5
other Oceania	0.3	0.4
not stated	1.8	1.7

Note: This table counts all persons in WA on Census night

From: Families in Focus in Western Australia, A.B.S. 1988

Appendix 2

Equal Employment Opportunity Legislation (EEO)

Staff should become familiar with the following EEO principles. These are particularly relevant for overseas trained caregivers.

* Equal Employment Opportunities guarantee the rights of individuals in the workplace.

* Equal Employment Opportunity policies ensure that all workers are given an equal chance when they apply for employment, promotion or training and in their conditions of service.

* A person's race, sex, marital status or physical state should not reduce their chance of employment or promotion.

* EEO is the right to be considered for a job for which one is skilled and qualified and is based on the principle of recruitment or promotion by merit.

Appendix 3

RECRUITING WORKERS OF NON ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUND

* Job and person specification should be written in a way that does not exclude people from a NES background. The focus should be on the experience, skills and attributes required, not on the sort of person presumed to have such skills.

* Essential requirements should be reviewed to ensure that they are in fact essential, and they do not exclude or discourage applicants of non-English speaking background. Due regard should be given to the structural disadvantage sometimes experienced by people from a non-English speaking background in gaining relevant qualifications and work experience.

* Educational qualifications should be reviewed to ensure that they are essential to the job.

* Due regard should be given to skills and abilities which are developed in areas outside formal education. For example, voluntary work within the ethnic community.

* Where formal qualifications are required the willingness to consider accredited equivalents will assist in encouraging people with overseas qualifications to apply.

APPOINTING A SELECTION PANEL

Why is this important?

- The composition of the panel often affects the fairness and equality of the selection process.

- A panel composed of people from the same cultural, social and work background may have limited ability to assess applicants of different social and cultural background.

- The inclusion of an interviewer from a NESB (with relevant cross cultural skills) shows applicants that the organisation involves people from various backgrounds in its decision-making.

How?

- Invite participation on the panel from people with skills relevant to the position who are also from NESB.

- The members of the panel should all be sensitive to cultural differences and sympathetic in their approach to applicants from different ethnic backgrounds.

- Panel members should be aware of non-Discriminatory interviewing techniques.

Remember

Interviews often demand communication skills of interviewees which are not required for the job. This places NESB applicants at a severe disadvantage. It is important to assess the skills that are required for the job, and not just the interviewing techniques of applicants.

* A. Stonehouse *Opening the Doors* (1991) provides a guide to assessment criteria which should be considered when employing any new staff in a centre which values a cross - cultural perspective.
  This book also provides useful guidelines on supporting overseas trained workers once employed in a centre.

Appendix 4

Introduction to Our Room's Caregiving Policies and Practices'

1. Hygiene

2. Safety

3. Toilet training

4. Play

5. Non-sexist caregiving practices

6. Discipline and Limits

7. Communications with Parents

Signed:
Dated:

Appendix 5

SAMPLE HANDBOOK FOR THREE WEEK PRACTICE: DAY CARE 0-3 YEARS

TASKS TO BE CARRIED OUT IN WEEK 1

a. Write names and dates of birth of all children in the room.
b. Play and have fun with the children familiarising yourself with their developmental levels.
c. Familiar yourself with the daily schedule of the room.
d. Discuss with staff their caregiving policies and practices.
e. Participate in everyday domestic chores.
f. Familiarise yourself and participate as a team member in caregiving routines i.e. feeding, changing and toileting of children.
g. Identify any children whom may have specials needs or require particular sensitivity by you when guiding their behaviour. (This information must be regarded as strictly confidential).
h. Discuss with training staff how and why children are grouped the way that they are.
i. Familiarise yourself with all of the equipment and materials in the centre.
j. Familiarise yourself with the games, songs and stories that the children enjoy.
k. Commence observations and written records of individual children during spontaneous play and daily routines to use for planning experiences for next week.

Discuss and plan with the staff your tasks for Week 2.

TASKS TO BE CARRIED OUT IN WEEK 2

a. Continue to participate as a team member during all routines, assuming increased responsibilities for meal times and the toileting/changing of children.
b. Identify ways in which the staff and the environment encourage social behaviours and independence at mealtimes.
c. Identify ways in which the staff and the environment encourage the children to:
   * Show respect and gentleness towards each other.
   * Develop a positive self concept.
   * Make decisions.
   * Help with domestic routines and self help tasks.
d. Discuss with training staff how decisions are made in regards to:
   * delegation of duties.
   * rosters.
   * other responsibilities.
e. Discuss the types of records that are kept on the children.
f. Plan, implement and evaluate 5 experiences for individuals and small groups of children. These experiences should cover a range of different play areas. For example:
   * Physically active play
   * Manipulative play
   * Dramatic play
   * Exploratory play
   * Music and language
g. Utilise aspects of your own culture/language with the children where appropriate. For example:
   * Teach a simple song in your own language
   * Greet children in your language and in English
   * Provide a snack for children/staff to taste
   * Sing and comfort children in your own language
   * Put on a music tape from your culture.
h. Select different children to those chosen in week 1 and continue to record behaviours and interests. Use these and evaluations of experiences to plan for next week.

Discuss and plan with staff your tasks for next week.

TASKS TO BE CARRIED OUT IN WEEK 3

a. Plan, implement and evaluate the children's programme for the week. Written planning formats should be completed and discussed with staff prior to the implementation of the programme.
   * You are expected to effectively utilise time, space, staff and equipment to implement your programme.

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